



October 2, 2018

Subj: HB 5776

Chairman Hank Vaupel
Michigan House Republicans
N-896 House Office Building
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Chairman Vaupel:

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) is writing in support of HB 5776, which clarifies diagnostic authority and training standards for mental health counselors in Michigan. NBCC is the national certification organization for the counseling profession, representing over 65,000 National Certified Counselors (NCCs) in the United States and 2,021 in Michigan. NBCC also administers the licensure examinations for mental health counselors in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

NBCC supports HB 5776 because it updates the mental health counselor scope of practice to coincide with education and training in the licensure law. HB 5776 will add diagnosis to the scope of practice of mental health counselors while strengthening preparation standards. These changes will increase access to mental health services by ensuring consumers have a larger pool of trained providers. The legislation is consistent with counselor licensure laws in other states and aligned with the counselor accreditation standards.

In addition to updating the counselor scope of practice, HB 5776 also strengthens the portability requirements for the profession. The bill creates a uniform standard for counselors moving into the state that match national standards. These changes will increase the supply of qualified professionals and enhance innovative service delivery, such as telemental health services and military-friendly portability processes.

For these reasons, NBCC offers its full support of HB 5776.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendation. If we can be of further assistance, please contact me at long@nbcc.org or 336-482-2849.

Sincerely,

Jolie A. Long
Director of State Affairs
National Board for Certified Counselors